

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the allowance of claim 3 if said claim is rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicants have amended claims 1, 14 and 26 to include the co-stabilizer definition of claim 3.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9-10, 13-16, and 18-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 04185672. Claims 1-2, 4-6, 9-10, and 13-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Shimomura et al. (U.S. 5,837,754) taken in view of the evidence in Helbrecht et al. (U.S. 5,302,195). Claims 1-2, 4, 9-12, 14-16, 19, and 22-27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ishizuka et al. (U.S. 2001/0023267).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. In order to expedite prosecution, however, Applicants have amended all of the independent claims (claims 1, 14 and 26) to include the language of allowable claim 3.

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 04185672 or Shimomura et al. (U.S. 5,837,754) either of which in view of Moore et al. (U.S. 4,698,651). Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 04185672 or Shimomura et al. (U.S. 5,837,754) either of which in view of Evans et al. (U. S. 6,001,161). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. In order to expedite prosecution, however, Applicants have amended all of the independent claims (claims 1, 14 and 26) to include the language of allowable claim 3.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the claims as amended be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

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